

advisers and, naturally, soldiers. The result was as Moscow had predicted. The U.S.S.R. emerged as the victor, and will undoubtedly receive a great deal in return for its assistance. However, it took a considerable risk. Another defeat after those suffered in Egypt, the Sudan, Somalia and North Yemen would have meant a complete rejection of Communism in this strategic part of the African continent. Ethiopia has, therefore, become a major Soviet base and stronghold in the area. That is the main reason why Moscow did not hesitate to commit itself heavily and to call in its allies to tip the military balance in favour of the Dergue.

United States

In view of the expanding Soviet influence in the Horn, the United States has re-evaluated its strategy and its assistance to Ethiopia. While Ethiopia was a faithful ally, the United States provided it with considerable aid. More than half the military aid of the U.S. and 20 per cent of its economic aid to the African nations – several billion dollars over a period of 20 years – went to the government of Haile Selassie.

After the revolution of October 1974, this assistance was reduced while the United States waited for the Dergue to give the country a new direction. When the Dergue swung more and more clearly toward socialism, especially after the execution of members of the royal family, of dignitaries and of imperial ministers, Washington suspended its assistance indefinitely. Under the Carter Administration, the United States chose to remain outside the conflict until Somalia was defeated. Then it took an official position – that of safeguarding Somalia's borders and offering assistance to both parties for their rebuilding efforts.

The role of defender of Western values and interests has been played mainly by Saudi Arabia but also by other conservative Arab countries, such as the Sudan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. This changing-of-the-guard, which mainly affects Eritrea, developed in the context of a regional Arab strategy aimed at making the Red Sea an "Arab lake". With its "petro-dollars", its strong anti-Communist convictions and its aim of bringing Islam to greater prominence, Saudi Arabia has been one of the most active of these countries. It is constantly increasing its loans and financial contributions to its allies, and is leading an all-out campaign for Eritrea's independence. Iran, another wealthy oil-exporting, anti-Communist country, is also playing an important role.

With respect to diplomatic relations, Saudi Arabia is the country that led the

Arab world to decide quickly to support and defend the cause of Eritrea, which is mainly Moslem. Somalia, the Sudan, Chad, Egypt and the Eritrean liberation movements owe most of the financial aid they have received for their military programs to Saudi Arabia.

Riyadh's sustained efforts resulted in the splitting-up of the U.S.S.R.'s alliances with Somalia, Egypt and the Sudan and very recently drew the Marxist Government of North Yemen into its orbit with a promise of \$300 million in aid and a million tons of crude oil. With its assets, Saudi Arabia has undeniably become a major power, capable of exerting direct force throughout the region.

Secondary alliances

In the middle of all this instability, Djibouti is fighting for survival. Though the French promised to protect this piece of territory, Somalia and Ethiopia are both eying it hungrily, hoping to annex it themselves.

Though Kenya stands outside the conflict, it was indirectly involved. The northern part of the country, which was given to Kenya by Britain when the Somali Empire was partitioned, is inhabited mainly by Somalis. Kenya felt threatened by Somalia's drive to expand, since the border provinces of Bale and Sidamo were occupied by the WSLF. It is mainly for this reason that the Nairobi government announced its solidarity with Addis Ababa and reinforced Kenya's borders. It appears, however, that Kenya did not wish to go any further, and that its solidarity with Ethiopia was little more than verbal, despite the interception of an Egyptian plane loaded with arms en route for Somalia.

The Organization of African Unity was powerless to stop the civil war in Ethiopia and the fighting between Ethiopia and Somalia. In spite of the repeated appeals of the OAU for a cease-fire and several mediation attempts, all parties continued to fight. It was only when Somalia first began to suffer defeat and the United States increasingly made its position known that the Organization began to play a mediating role through General Obasanjo of Nigeria. However, mediation would not have been possible if Ethiopia, in the elation of victory, had not taken a conciliatory attitude in response to strong pressure from its Soviet ally.

Though all African countries claim to respect the OAU's charter (which stipulates, among other things, that the borders established when the African countries were colonies are not to be contested by arms), none of them has intervened to save Ethiopia. Ethiopia was literally overwhelmed by offers of arms from friendly Communist and socialist countries, but for

*Financial aid
for military
programs*